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CAMBRIDGE FAMILY NEWS

Information, Support, & Activities for Families of Children Ages 0-6

March - April 2006



The Director's Letter

Many of you know that the Cambridge 0-8 Council won a federal Early Learning Opportunities Act grant this year. We are especially pleased that this grant allows us to bring our great Infant Coordinator Marie-Noelle Doucet on as a full-time staff member. Marie-Noelle will continue to lead parent-infant groups in two locations (see page 4) and teach infant massage, and she will also be working with our ELOA partners to develop other resources.

One of the resources we can offer with the support of the ELOA grant is new parent/caregiver education and support groups. It helps everyone when parents and caregivers can share knowledge and experience about the important and challenging job of raising young children. So we're happy to announce that the Center for Families, the Agenda for Children, the Child Care Resource Center, and the Doula Program at Cambridge Hospital are working together to plan two new series of workshops.

For parents and caregivers of infants we will have workshops on Sleep, Nutrition, Post-partum Exercise, Choosing Childcare, and Healthy Homes. For parents and caregivers of children 0-4 we will cover topics such as Learning Through Play, Positive Discipline, Raising a Bilingual Child, Health & First Aid, Raising a Reader, Siblings & Friends, Parenting as a Team, and Parents & Teachers Working Together. Workshops will take place in different sites around the City and at different times during the day, in the evening, and on Saturdays. Some will be offered in more than one language. If you have an idea about a great topic or want to help us to plan these groups, call or email me at 617-349-3002, jkapuscik@cambridgema.gov.

Jenn Kapuscik, Director

CENTER FOR FAMILIES DROP-IN PLAYTIMES

We bring toys, activities, singing, and snacks, you bring the kids and the fun. Bring your children (0-5) and come play with us. Adults must stay with the children. Call Luz at 617-349-6385 or Heather at 617-349-3003 for more information.

Mondays

Area IV Youth Center, 243 Harvard St.
10:00 - 11:30 am

Spanish Group (starts March 6th)
Margaret Fuller, 71 Cherry St.
10:00 - 11:30 am

Parent-Infant Group
Center for Families, 70 Rindge Ave. (rear)
12:30-2:30 pm (babies under 14 months)

Tuesdays

Gately Youth Center, 70 Rindge Ave. (rear)
10:00 am-11:30 pm

Fresh Pond Apartments, 364 Rindge Ave.
10:30 am-12:00 pm

Wednesdays

Area IV Youth Center, 243 Harvard St.
10:00 am - 11:30 am

Thursdays

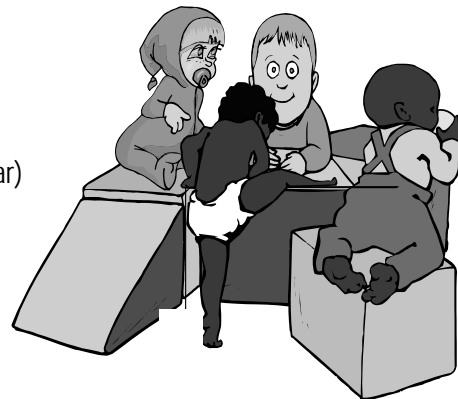
Gately Youth Center, 70 Rindge Ave. (rear)
10:00-11:30 am

402 Rindge Avenue
10:00-11:30 am (residents only)

Parent-Infant Group (starts March 2nd)
Margaret Fuller, 71 Cherry Street
12:30-2:30 pm (babies under 14 months)

Fridays

Walden Square Community Room, 21 Walden Square Road
1:30-3:00 pm



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PLAYING AND LEARNING

Squeezy Bottle Glitter Painting

Ingredients: 1 part flour, 1 part salt, 1 part water, Food coloring

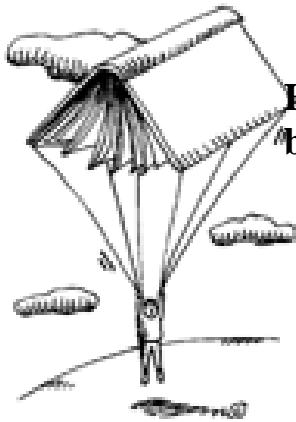
Mix equal parts of flour, salt and water. Pour into plastic squeeze bottles, such as those used for mustard and ketchup. Add food coloring for variety. Squeeze onto heavy construction paper or cardboard. The salt gives the designs a glistening quality when dry.

Books to read

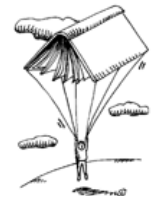
Babies
by Rachel Isadora



Here are my hands
by Valerie Fournery



From Seed To Pear
by Ali Mitgutsch



Macaroni Coloring

Ingredients: Macaroni, food coloring, small ziploc baggies

An easy, fun, non-messy method of coloring macaroni. In a small baggie add 2 handfuls of macaroni and food coloring. Seal the baggie and have a child shake the baggie until the macaroni is colored. Lay out on paper towels to dry. You can play lively music during the baggie shaking part.

Now macaroni can be strung like beads to make a necklace, glued on paper to make a picture, or perhaps even eaten for lunch. Ask children what they can do with the colored macaroni. You might be surprised.

CENTER FOR FAMILIES NEWS

Welcome to Our New Outreach Staff!

The Outreach Team at the Center for Families is delighted to welcome two new members to our team, Grace Fung and Mohabbat Begum. For those of you who don't know, the Outreach Team works to bring the Center for Families' programming and information to English learning families and others who might otherwise not be able to access what we offer. We currently have drop in playgroups at 364 Rindge Avenue, 402 Rindge Avenue, and at the Walden Square Apartments.

Grace and Maya are both wonderful additions to our team. Grace has been active at the Center for Families both as a parent who attended groups and as a volunteer who co-lead and created new groups at the Center. Grace is fluent in Chinese and Japanese and has already been a big help in reaching out to these communities. Mohabbat, or Maya, has been a childcare provider for nearly twenty years in our community and has attended an outreach drop in group over the years with different children in her care. She has a lot of knowledge about child development and how to support families. She is also fluent in Bangla and has really helped connect the Center to mothers in our community who are still learning English and feeling isolated at home. We hope you will join us in giving Grace and Maya a warm welcome as they join the Center for Families outreach staff!

HURRAY, IT'S SPRING! Celebrate at Family Fun Night



Join us for a Springtime Family Dance for children from 0-5 years and their families. Bring a picnic for your family; beverages and dessert provided.

Friday, March 24th, 6:00-7:30 pm

Peabody School Cafeteria

70 Rindge Avenue (near Porter Sq. and 83 bus)

Call 617-349-6385 for information or directions.

It's Here: The Center for Families at Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House

Starting in March, the Center for Families will have regular activities at the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in the Area IV/Central Square area. We have been working with the staff at MFNH on this collaboration for over two years. We're thrilled to be able to reach more families by joining with this historic community agency.

Many thanks to our partners: Marian Darlington-Hope of the MFNH Board, Exec. Director Barbara Kibler, and staff members Galin Brooks, Janet Decker, and Mario Quijano.

Come One and All! 5th Annual Caring for Babies Forum March 18, 2006, 8:30 am-2:30 pm

The 5th Annual Caring for Babies Forum is a free event for all Cambridge parents, early childhood educators, and anyone interested in the growth & development of young children ages zero to three. You must register by March 11th.

Keynote Talk: Oral Health for Families

Workshops:

- The ABC's of Children's Health
- Things Kids Do That Drive Us Nuts
- Messy Play Throughout the Day!
- Baby Signing
- Humor Talks
- Sharing Books with Children
- "Typical" Development and Signs of Delay
- Pre-Natal Yoga/Family Yoga
- Workshops in Spanish and Haitian Creole



Networking and Community Resources

Childcare available

Registration forms are available now. Pick one up at the Center for Families or you can call Melissa at the Child Care Resource Center at (617) 547-1063 x 237 or find them on the web at <http://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP2/families.cfm>

OCCS credits available for child care providers.

PARENT EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

MOMS' DISCUSSION GROUP

(Mothers of children ages 0-6)

Being a mom is challenging. You have to juggle your time and roles—mother, spouse, worker, learner. Take a break to think about your priorities, share with other moms, and talk about where you want to go. Snacks and limited childcare provided.

Facilitator: Suzan Wolpow

Saturdays, 10:00-11:30 am,

March 11th, April 8th, and May 6th

Center for Families, Peabody School

****You must call to sign up for childcare 617-349-6385 ****



PARENT INFANT GROUP

(parents with infants ages 0-14 months)

This informal support and discussion group offers parents with infants up to 14 months the opportunity to share experiences, ask questions, and meet other parents while babies sleep, eat, gurgle, or safely explore in our infant-toddler room. We have two groups, so please choose only one group to attend per week.

Facilitator: Marie-Noelle Doucet

Mondays, 12:30 - 2:30 pm, Center for Families, 70 Rindge Ave.

Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 pm, Margaret Fuller House, 71 Cherry St.

No Pre-registration Required

DADS' MORNING OUT

(Fathers of children ages 0-6)

Dads and kids play together and then dads have time to talk.

Facilitator: Rick Colbath-Hess

Saturdays, 9:30 -11:30 am

March 4th and 25th, April 15th and 29th

Center for Families, Peabody School

****You must call to sign up for childcare 617-349-6385 ****

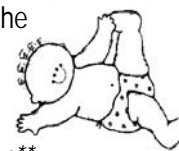
INFANT MASSAGE

(parents with infants ages 2 months - pre-crawling)

Massaging your baby gives you a wonderful opportunity to connect with your child. Massage can also help with digestion, sleep, and baby's health. Groups are meeting in the Peabody School, Walden Square, and Windsor Clinic. (for WIC participants only)

Instructor: Marie-Noelle Doucet, CMI.

****Call 617-349-3003 to sign up for the next session****



THE RENAISSANCE JOURNEY

(moms with children ages 0-6)

This 6-week group for mothers focuses on creating a supportive community and caring for ourselves. Food and childcare are provided for this group. Please call 617-349-6967 for more information and registration.

Facilitator: Nadine Jones-Ruffin

Date and location to be announced

Workshops for Parents and Caregivers of Infants

Post-partum Exercise

Thursday, March 23rd, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House,
71 Cherry Street

Presenter: Sybille Bosslet, Physical Therapist,
with Luz Hernandez interpreting for Spanish speakers.

For more information, contact Marie-Noelle at 617-349- 3003 x 2, mdoucet@cambridgema.gov; or Robin Snyder-Drummond at 617-435-0693, msnyderdrummond@challiance.org.

Healthy Homes & Choosing Child Care

Saturday April 29th, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Center for Families, Peabody School,
70 Rindge Ave.

Workshops will be presented in English, Spanish and,
Haitian-Creole.

PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITIES

Parent & Child Relaxation Yoga Class

(for parent-child pairs together, children ages 3-6)

Discover and explore the joy of connecting with your child doing fun and relaxing exercises & games. To register for either class session, please contact Marie-Noelle at 617-349-3003 ext. 2 or mdoucet@cambridgema.gov. Limited childcare available for younger children by arrangement.

Facilitator: Marie-Noelle Doucet

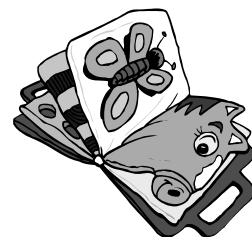
Saturdays, March 25th, April 8th
10:30 -11:30 am
Center for Families, Peabody School



Pajama Story Hour at the O'Neill Branch Library

Parents and children can come to the library in pajamas on the last Wednesday of the month to hear stories read by neighborhood parents and enjoy a snack before bed. This is a great way to visit the library as a family. Bring a favorite book to share and discover new favorites.

Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 pm
March 29th, April 26th, May 31st
O'Neill Branch Library,
70 Rindge Avenue



CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY PLAYGROUPS

Spring groups will begin in late March. You must register for these groups.

Cambridge Community Playgroups are group activities for children and their parents or caregivers to attend together. Playgroups provide developmentally appropriate activities for children from 1 to 5 years old, including children with special needs.

Dates and times are still being set for the Spring session. Registration forms will be mailed to families on the Center for Families mailing list or you can request information by calling Nadine at 617-349-6967 or Michelle at 617-547-1063 x 271.

Each playgroup can serve a limited number of children. A lottery is used to make sure that everyone has an equal chance of getting into the group of their choice. Families from the waiting list are given priority.

Community Playgroups will be at the following locations:

King Open School
Windsor Head Start
Center for Families, Peabody School

Jefferson Park Head Start
Moore Youth Center

Special Community Playgroups:

Tiny Tots - ages 15-24 months
Spanish Playgroup - ages 1-3
Preschool Playgroup - 3-5 years only



FAMILIES OF TWINS AND MULTIPLES

Come to the Center for Families for a Saturday afternoon play date with other families of twins and multiples. This monthly gathering is a purely social occasion. We'll have activities for the kids and snack will be provided. Call or e-mail Marie-Noelle to register, 617-349-3003-ext 2. mdoucet@cambridgema.gov

Saturday - March 25th and April 8th
3:30 - 5:00 pm
Center for Families, Peabody School, 70 Rindge Avenue (rear entrance)



COMMUNITY RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES

The Somerville/Cambridge WIC program provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, referrals to community health care services, and nutritious foods for pregnant, lactating and postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five. To be eligible for WIC, you must:

- Live in Massachusetts,
- Be pregnant; a breastfeeding or postpartum mother; an infant or child under the age of 5; or have a medical or nutritional need (risk), and
- Have an income that is at or below 185% of the poverty level.

Windsor Street Health Center, 119 Windsor Street, 617-665-3750

Office hours: Monday 8 am-7:30 pm, Wednesday - Thursday 10 am-6:30 pm, Friday 8 am-4:30 pm, and 1st and 3rd Saturdays 8 am-4 pm

North Cambridge WIC office, Jefferson Park, Rindge Avenue, 617-661-4084

Office hours: Thursday 8:30 am-6 pm, Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm

The Doula Program at the Cambridge Health Alliance offers support groups run by multilingual Doulas (birth and parenting coaches). The Mothers' Support Group meets on Wednesdays from 10-12 am and the Breastfeeding Support Group meets on Thursdays from 10-12 am. Groups are open to all. Call for more information: 617-665-1164.

Cambridge Birth Center, 8 Camelia Avenue
(across from the entrance of the Cambridge Hospital).

Cambridge-Somerville Early Intervention (CSEI) runs inclusive parent/child playgroups that provide opportunities for children with a variety of strengths and needs to engage in developmentally appropriate play. Groups are open to children up to 3 years old. Families not enrolled in Early Intervention pay a fee based on a sliding scale.



Call 617-629-3919 for information.
CSEI, 61 Medford Street, Somerville

A CO-OPERATIVE BABYSITTING GROUP

About a dozen families have expressed their interest in forming a babysitting co-operative. The Center for Families is happy to host a meeting, but one or two parents are needed to lead the meeting and get the group organized.

If you want to be part of the organizing meeting, contact Marie-Noelle Doucet: 617-349-3003 ext-2 or e-mail mdoucet@cambridgema.org.

Cambridge Public Library Programs for Young Children

The Cambridge Library is a great place for families. Call your local branch for information about storytimes and family activities. Remember that the library also has museum passes you can check out with your library card. For listings see www.cambridgema.gov/~CPL/ or call 617-349-4038.

Main Children's Room, 359 Broadway (617) 349-4038

Mon. 11:00 am - Toddler Sing; Thurs. 11:00 - Toddler Story Time

Tues. 4:00 pm - Preschool Story Time (3+); Wed. 4:00 pm - Family Story Time (all ages)

Boudreau Branch, 245 Concord Avenue (617) 349-4017

Mon. 10:30 - Preschool Story Time (3-5s); Wed. 10:30 am - Toddler Sing-Along

Central Square Branch, 45 Pearl Street (617) 349-4010

Wed. 10:30 am Toddler/Preschool Story Time; Thurs. 10:30 am Toddler/Preschool Sing

Collins Branch, 64 Aberdeen Avenue (617) 349-4021

Tues. & Fri. 10:00 - Toddler Sing; Thurs. 4:00 pm - Preschool Story Time (3+)

O'Connell Branch, 48 Sixth Street (617) 349-4019

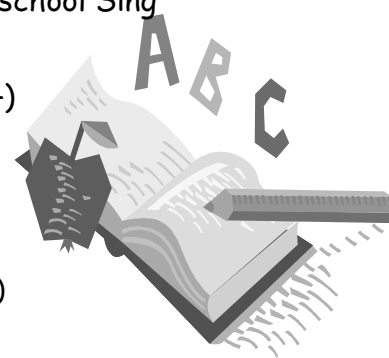
Wed. 11:00 am - Toddler Sing; Thurs. 3:30 pm - Stories and Crafts (3-7s)

O'Neill Branch, 70 Rindge Avenue (617) 349-4023

Mon. 10:30 am - Toddler Time; Thurs. 11:00 am - Preschool Story Time (3-5s)

Valente Branch, 826 Cambridge Street (617) 349-4015

Mon. 3:30 pm - Preschool Story Time (3-5s); Tues. 1:30 pm - Portuguese Story Hour (school age)



COMMUNITY NEWS

Kindergarten Registration

Children who will be turning 4 years old on or before March 31, 2006 are eligible for kindergarten in the Fall. Parents can fill out applications and register their children any time starting in January.

The Family Resource Center for the Cambridge Public Schools is located at 459 Broadway and their number is (617) 349-6551. You can also visit their website to download forms or find out how to set up a school visit at: <http://www.cpsd.us/FRC/CambFamRes.cfm>.

It's time to think about summer camp!

Despite the recent snow, it is time to think about signing children up for summer camp. The Department of Human Service Programs is sponsoring a **Summer Resource / Camp Information Night on Thursday, March 9, 2006 from 6:30 – 8:00 pm** [SNOW DATE: Thursday, March 16]. The event will be held at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School Main Cafeteria, 459 Broadway. Come meet the representatives for Cambridge Community School camps and other private and public camps, including Boston area programs for children with disabilities. Parking is available in the school garage.

For additional information, call Roslyn Shoy at 617-349-6227.



+ Family First Aid Essentials

For a “basic first aid for parents” workshop, Dr. Lisa Dobberteen, pediatrician at the North Cambridge Health Center, offered the following list of basic supplies to have on hand at home to be able to treat common childhood ailments. Always contact your own doctor if you have questions about your child’s health.

Supplies

- A good reference book about children’s health and development
- Digital thermometer
- Ice pack or substitute (frozen veggies or wet cloth in a plastic bag)
- Band-aids, gauze, tape, assorted bandages
- Elastic or Ace bandage

Creams, lotions, etc.

- Good quality moisturizer: Vaseline, Aquaphor, Aveeno, etc.
- Sunscreen: spf=15 or higher
- Insect repellent: child’s formulation with Deet <10%
- Caladryl or lotion containing Benadryl
- Antibiotic cream/ointment: e.g. Bacitracin, Neosporin
- Colloidal oatmeal bath preparation: Aveeno, etc.

Non-prescription/over the counter medications

- Pedialyte liquid (freezer pops are nice) or Kaolectrolyte powder
- Tylenol/acetaminophen: child’s dose 8 mg/10 lbs. every 4 hrs
- Motrin/ibuprofen: child’s dose 5 mg/10 lbs. every 6-8 hrs
- Benadryl/diphenhydramine: child’s dose 0.5 mg/12 lbs. every 4-6 hrs
- Feverall suppositories: 80 mg for babies, 120 mg for small children
- Syrup of Ipecac ** call Poison Control (617-232-2120) before giving Ipecac **



Call your health care provider with questions about your own child’s health.

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Center for Families

c/o Peabody School

70 Rindge Avenue

Cambridge, MA 02140

Office and Resource Room: Community Wing
(entrance at back of school)

Funding for Center for Families Programs

The Center for Families receives funding from the City of Cambridge, the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE), and the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund (CTF). Ours is one of 41 programs around the state that are part of the DOE Massachusetts Family Network and CTF Mass Family Centers programs. We also receive financial and administrative support from the Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs, Cambridge Public Schools, and Cambridge Health Alliance.

Programs are also funded in part by the Cambridge 0-8 Council ELOA Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Center for Families serves families of children 0-6. Activities are open to all Cambridge residents.



Center for Families

c/o Peabody School

70 Rindge Avenue

Cambridge, MA 02140

